

The Paper

Our Town, Our Paper!



Laurens, Iowa



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Local News

Beneke Law Firm Legacy Lives On with Lemmenes and Dodgen

After 51 years of practicing law, Don Beneke has officially retired. As he wound down remaining open cases, he and his family began making plans to continue the legacy of his practice and ensure his clients would continue to get top-notch legal care.

Don is a Laurens native but established his practice in Pocahontas. "I had a great run in Pocahontas," said Beneke. "When I first came to town, I purchased the Shaw law firm (at 328 North Main Street) before venturing out on my own, moving across the street to the current building at 309 North Main Street. I was blessed to meet Fannie Bollard when I first started, who had provided secretarial support to the original owner, Frank Shaw." She developed close relationships with clients over the years, and when Don moved his



Don Beneke

practice, Fannie continue to provide administrative support for many years.

"I was in business long enough – and lucky enough - to have two of Fannie's granddaughters providing administrative support on my team: Kathy Nomann and Jeannine Goedert. They have both been incredible to work with. Most recently, since 2017, Jeannine has been instrumental in making things happen at my office," said Beneke. "We wouldn't have been able to complete the process of closing without her."

New firm owners: Lemmenes and Dodgen

The Beneke family recently came to an agreement to sell the law practice to Andy Lemmenes and Brandon Dodgen, whose main office is located in Humboldt. Founded in 1880 under the names of the original partners Garfield and Edwards, Lemmenes & Dodgen is now one of the oldest continually operating

law firms in Iowa.

We've been interested in expanding our practice to Pocahontas County" said Dodgen. "Our main focus is on wills, trusts & estate planning, probate, real estate, business and taxation work, and we know Don had a really strong practice going in these areas. We are pleased to be able to continue that work for his clients."

"I knew that Don is a really respected attorney in the Pocahontas area, and so we were excited when the opportunity to purchase his practice became available" said Lemmenes.

"I have a high level of confidence that Brandon and Andy will continue

...continued to page 2...



Andy Lemmenes (left) and Brandon Dodgen (right)

...continued from page 1...

to provide extraordinary legal counsel,” said Beneke. “My clients can continue to use my office’s phone number to reach them.”

Lemmenes and Dodgen have established a satellite office in Pocahontas at 229 N. Main Street and are now available to meet with clients there by appointment. To learn more about them, please visit their website at www.northerniowalaw.com or contact them at 712-335-3515.

Law Firm Building Purchased by Frankes

The Beneke Law Firm building (at 309 N. Main Street) was recently purchased by April and Scott Franke. April and Scott own Pocahontas Title Company, a business that was previously owned by attorneys Don Beneke and Dennis Fitzgerald. “We hired April many years ago to work in our title company, and she did a fantastic job of learning the business. A little over two years ago, I sold the business to the Frankes, and they’ve done very well,” said Beneke. “I have such a high regard for her – and Scott – and am happy that they are the new owners. I know they’ll take great care of the building and continue to successfully build their business.”

Murray Law Firm will rent office space and continue to operate from the building.

Thank you!

I want to thank to Laurens Chamber for the basket I won. What a fun surprise filled with so many great things from our local businesses!

Morgan Woodley

Laurens Women's Club to Meet

The Laurens Women’s Club will meet Friday, April 14 at 1:30 p.m. at the Laurens Public Library. Glenda Mulder will share information “All About the Laurens Public Library” including the music garden. Sue Wenell will give the book report for the month. Members of the serving committee will be Betty VanHorsen and Sue Wenell.

Community Bridal Shower

A community bridal shower will be held for Madeline Jameson, bride-elect of Evan Balder, on Saturday, April 15, 2023 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Albert City, IA. A short program will begin at 2:00 o'clock.

Madeline is the daughter of Tim and Jennifer Jameson of Waukee, IA and Evan is the son of Paula and Dave Balder of Albert City, IA. Madeline and Evan are registered at the Straw Horse, Sugar Bowl and Target.

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Nuisance Contract Work Bids

The City of Laurens is taking sealed bids for nuisance contract work. Contract Bid Forms may be picked up at City Hall and must be received by noon on Friday, April 14th.

Any questions, please contact City Manager, Hilary Reed, at 712-841-4526.

At the Library
with Glenda Mulder
April 12, 2023

Next Wednesday, April 19 will be a busy evening at our library! At 5:30 p.m. we have Tot Time fun with butterflies, songs, books, a craft, and bubbles! Then something completely different at 7 p.m. - Villisca Axe Murders Program by author Ed Epperly. His book, "*Fiend Incarnate: Villisca Axe Murders of 1912*" explores the brutal murders of Josiah B. Moore, his wife Sara, their children Herman, Katherine, Boyd and Paul, and two overnight guests, Lena and Ina Stillinger, discovered in the early morning hours of Monday, June 10, 1912 in the small village of Villisca, Iowa. The sensational crime led to nearly ten years of investigations and trials. The small southwest Iowa town of Villisca split over the guilt or innocence of a local businessman and State Senator. A traveling minister from England with a history of window peeping was charged and tried. Investigators and reporters across the country speculated that the brutal crime was the work of an early serial killer. Similar crimes had been committed in Colorado Springs, Colorado; Ellsworth, Kansas; and Monmouth, Illinois. Join us as we learn more!

New novels this week include: *Only Survivors* by Megan Miranda, *Seaside Library* by Brenda Novak, *Old Flame* by Molly Prentiss, *Your Truly* by Abby Jimenez, *Trackers* by Charles Frazier, *My Heart Will Find You* by Jude Deveraux, *Simply Lies* by David Baldacci, *Where Coyotes Howl* by Sandra Dallas, *Echo of Old Books* by Barbara Davis, *Golden Doves* by Martha Kelly, *If We're Being Honest* by Cat Shook, *Silver Alert* by Lee Smith, *Saturday Night at the Lakeside Supper Club* by Ryan Stradal, *Adelaide* by Genevieve Wheeler and *City of Dreams* by Don Winslow.

In nonfiction we received *The Watchmaker's Daughter: the true story of World War II heroine Corrie Ten Boom* by Larry Loftis and *Saved: A War Reporter's Mission to Make It Home* by Benjamin Hall.

Book Club will be reading the 2023 All Iowa Reads choice, *How High We Go in the Dark*. One reviewer said, "Sequoia Nagamatsu takes readers on a wildly original and compassionate journey, spanning continents, centuries, and even celestial bodies to tell a story about the resilience of the human spirit, our infinite capacity to dream, and the connective threads that tie us all together in the universe." This is definitely outside my usual reading genres, but that's one of the things that makes Book Club (and All Iowa Reads) fun! Local readers I have talked to have been hesitant about it at first, but one that I talked to said that when she finished it she almost wanted to read it again. Hmmmm, now I'm curious!

Dates to Remember

April 18 @ 6:30 p.m. - Cardmaking

April 19 @ 5:30 p.m. - Evening Tot Time

April 19 @ 7 p.m. - Villisca Axe Murders Program by Ed Epperly

April 24 @ 7 p.m. - Book Club *How High We Go in the Dark* by Sequoia Nagamatsu

May 2 Take it Tuesday caterpillars for the kids & lighthouses for the adults!

June 5 @ 7 p.m. - Lincoln Highway by Darcy Maulsby

July 8 11-1 Local Authors Fair at Laurens Summer Celebration

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This Week at Bethany Lutheran

Pastor David E. Klappenbach

Sunday: April 16, 2023
Second Sunday of Easter

9:15 AM ~ Adult SS
9:30 AM ~ Youth SS & Coffee Fellowship
10:30 AM ~ Worship
11:30 AM ~ Potluck
3:00 PM ~ 4-H Club Mtg.
5:00-6:30 PM ~ Youth Group at BLC

Monday: April 17, 2023

7:00 PM ~ Hand Bell Rehearsal

Tuesday: April 18, 2023

8:30 AM ~ Prayer Group
9:30 AM ~ Tuesday coffee at Bethany

Thursday: April 20, 2023

2:00 PM ~ Circle Group

*Worship, Love,
Accept~ Together in
Christ's Name*



This Week at Laurens United Methodist Church

Pastor Deb Parkison

Wed., April 12:

NO Caring Cards
Lifeline Reveal Party @ 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

Fri., April 14:

AA meeting 7 p.m.-8 p.m. in Wesley Room

Sun., April 16:

Sunday School @ 9:10 a.m.
Fellowship Coffee @ 9:30 a.m.
Worship @ 10:30 a.m.

Mon., April 17:

Bible Study @ 6:30 p.m. at Laurens UMC

Wed., April 19:

Administrative Council meeting @ 7 p.m.



This Week at First Christian

Pastor Rev. Rita Cordell

Wednesday, April 12

1 p.m. - Movie at the church

Thursday, April 13 -

2-5 p.m. - Clothes Closet Open

Sunday, April 16

9:30 a.m. - Sunday School
10:30 a.m. - Worship



Resurrection of Our Lord Catholic Church

**Pocahontas, IA -- Pastor: Very
Rev. Craig Collison, VF**

MASS TIMES:

Daily Mass as scheduled in the weekly bulletin
Saturday at 5:00 PM and Sunday at 10:30 AM

Confessions: Saturday 4:15 pm at Resurrection

Iowa Beef Center to Host Fencing and Grazing Clinic

***May clinic to provide timely
information for upcoming
grazing season***

The 2023 Fencing and Grazing Clinic, organized and hosted by the Iowa Beef Center and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, is set for May 16 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Iowa State University Armstrong Memorial Research and Demonstration Farm near Lewis, in southwest Iowa.

Erika Lundy-Woolfolk, beef specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach, said the clinic is timely and practical. There is no cost to attend the event, but preregistration is required.

“By holding this clinic in May, we hope participants will be able to take more information they’ve learned and put it to use this grazing season,” she said. “Attendees will learn about new fencing tools and technology, managing paddocks and unwanted forages to improve productivity and more.”

Lundy-Woolfolk and Iowa Beef Center extension program specialist Beth Reynolds are

planning the daylong event, which will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Wallace Learning Center, at the farm, 53020 Hitchcock Ave., Lewis.

“In the morning, our hands-on learning includes a permanent and temporary fencing demonstration led by Gallagher, and a group activity on designing paddocks within your pasture, led by NRCS,” Lundy-Woolfolk said. “We’ve also planned classroom sessions on identifying and managing weeds in pastures, water quality and building a grazing calendar.”

Topics and confirmed speakers are:

- New Tools in Fencing – Brad Cochran and Brad Ketchum, Gallagher.
- Building your Paddocks – Kayla Creek, Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Red Flag Forages – Aaron Saeugling, ISU Extension and Outreach field agronomist.
- Planning a Grazing Calendar – Beth Reynolds and Erika Lundy-Woolfolk, Iowa Beef Center.
- Water Quality: Testing, Interpreting, and Impact on Performance – Garland Dahlke, Iowa Beef Center.

There is no cost to attend thanks to the event sponsors:

Gallagher, Iowa Forage and Grassland Council, Theisen’s, Millborn Seeds, Iowa State Beef Checkoff Program, Practical Farmers of Iowa and Dairyland Laboratories Inc.

Preregistration is required to attend and should be made no later than Friday, May 12. To register, contact Lundy-Woolfolk at ellundy@iastate.edu or 641-745-5902; or Reynolds at bethr@iastate.edu or 307-761-3353.

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Springtime Experiences Help Children Connect with Nature

According to an old saying, April showers bring May flowers. However, according to research, April showers also provide rich outdoor learning experiences for children, says Cindy Thompson, human sciences specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

“It is important for children to experience the outdoors during each season, but spring is an especially unique time to watch the world wake up from winter – with fun-filled puddles, squishy mud, earth worms and so much more,” said Thompson, who specializes in family wellbeing.

Research gathered by the Children and Nature Network highlights many benefits of being in the outdoors. Children who spend time outdoors are more active, less likely to be overweight, have more balance and coordination, and are less likely to need glasses. Research also supports behavioral benefits to children being outdoors, such as increased concentration, creativity, problem solving and cooperative behavior, the Children and Nature Network reported.

“Spending time outdoors also has been shown over and over again to reduce cortisol levels, which is the hormone linked to stress, in both children and adults,” Thompson said. “Being outside helps us feel happier and less stressed.”

The challenge for many families, though, is the belief that there just isn't

time. Spring often brings new sports schedules, religious events, graduations, and for many families, fieldwork or changes in work schedules.

“Managing the day-to-day tasks of family life brings its own type of stress,” Thompson said, “but spending even brief periods of time in nature can help calm nerves and reconnect children and parents to each other.”

An important element of getting outdoors in the spring is accepting messiness. Children's natural curiosity draws them to puddles, mud and new things to see in the spring. “Embrace the messiness and plan ways to support this curiosity,” Thompson said.

Keep old shoes or rain boots easily accessible. “You can also use bread sacks as an easy shoe protector for little feet,” said Thompson. Use the extra daylight for a quick walk around the yard or neighborhood to look for flowers and grasses starting to grow.

Sit on the back porch and listen for birds. “Children experience the world through their senses. Seeing, listening, touching and even tasting are ways to engage children in the benefits of being outdoors,” Thompson said.

ISU Extension and Outreach offers educational opportunities for early childhood professionals to help them nurture children's sense of wonder and transform their preschool or child care play spaces into fun, joyful areas where children can explore nature. Participants are eligible for professional development credit approved by Iowa's Department of Health and Human Services.

“Parents can encourage their child care providers to take advantage of this education from ISU Extension and Outreach. It's another way to provide opportunities for children to experience nature,” Thompson said.


Unsung Heroes Supporting Beneficial Insects and Pollinators on the Farm And At Home

Please join Pocahontas County Extension and Outreach and Sarah Nizzi with the Xerces Society for an event centered around beneficial insects and pollinators and their role on our farms and gardens. This program will take place at the Extension office in Pocahontas on Wednesday, April 19th, from 2:00-3:00 PM. Sarah will cover different beneficial insect groups, native bees, habitat considerations and options, cost-share opportunities, and resources. The Xerces Society is an international non-profit organization that works to preserve wildlife by conserving invertebrates.

Stop in to celebrate ISU Extension Week with us for many fun activities and prizes, April 17-21!

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City Council Minutes

April 3rd, 2023

The Laurens City Council met in regular session at the Municipal Building at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 3rd, 2023. Mayor Rod Johnson called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Hannah Zylstra, Loren Booth, Aaron Christenson, Jean Swanson, City Manager Hilary Reed, Chief of Police Ben Aschenbrenner, and Officer Sam Richison. Council Member John Jamison was absent.

Zylstra moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the March 20th, meeting, and the list of claims. Booth seconded. All ayes: motion carried.

CLAIMS 04-03-23

A & M SERVICES, INC	MOPS, RAGS, RUGS	97.64
ACCO	CHEMICALS	3,668.00
AHLERS & COONEY PC	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	410.00
ALLIANT ENERGY	MAR MONTHLY GAS BILL	461.39
ALPHA WIRELESS COMM	PAGERS	2,623.70
BOMGAARS	SHOP SUPPLIES	105.84
DAKOTA SUPPLY GROUP	SHOP SUPPLY CROSS CHAINS	1,392.01
DEE JACKSON / JACKSON MOTOR	SNOW REMOVAL	40.00
ECHO GROUP, INC.	BULBS	114.88
FIRE SVC TRAINING BUREAU	HAZMAT TRAINING	50.00
FOUNDATION ANALYTICAL LAB	WASTEWATER TESTING	624.50
GFC LEASING - WI	COPIER LEASING CANNON	67.32
GRAHAM TIRE SPENCER	PD TIRES	551.64
HEIMAN	PUMP REPAIR FOR TRUCK 390	670.90
IACMA	RETIREMENT 457	500.00
IRS	FED/FICA TAX	5,414.79
IPERS	IPERS	6,006.29
IPERS/PD	PROTECTED IPERS	1,665.14
KC NIELSON	BELT FOR TRUCK	87.76
LMU	MONTHLY UTILITIES	6,608.12
MACKENZIE JOHNSEN	HOG FOR POOL FUNDRAISER	500.00
POC COMMUNITY HOSPITAL	RANDOM TESTING	34.75
PRIME BENEFITS SYSTEM	MONTHLY GROUP INSURANCE	87.50
SANDRY FIRE SUPPLY, LLC	TRUCK SUPPLIES	1,413.50
SANTANDER LEASING, LLC	MONTHLY PUMPER PAYMENT	1,461.34
SECURE SHRED SOLUTIONS	PAPER SHREDDING	26.00
STAPLES	OFFICE SUPPLIES	255.24
THOMPSON INNOVATION	CHANGES TO PUMP	230.00
TREASURER STATE OF IA	MAR SALES TAX	4,386.97
US BANK	OFFICE SUPPLIES	25.84
	TOTAL	<u>39,581.06</u>

PAYROLL	3/20/2023	
001 GENERAL		6,210.49
210 ROAD USE TAX		1,546.45
600 WATER		2,656.15
610 SEWER		2,584.12
670 GARBAGE		2,762.69
	TOTAL	<u>15,759.90</u>
	PAYROLL TOTAL	<u>15,759.90</u>
	PAID TOTAL	<u>55,340.96</u>

001 GENERAL	22,019.89
110 ROAD USE TAX	6,245.22
112 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	48.11

City Council Minutes

174	POOL RESTRICTED	500.00
600	WATER	14,257.81
610	SEWER	6,760.26
670	GARBAGE	5,509.67
	TOTAL BY FUND	<u>55,340.96</u>

REVENUES	GENERAL	9,776.65
	ROAD USE TAX	8,385.34
	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	2,238.08
	EMERGENCY LEVY	130.24
	LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX	13,858.54
	TAX INCREMENT FINANCING	331.99
	POOL RESTRICTED	5,915.00
	DEBT SERVICE	2,469.22
	CAPITAL EQUIPMENT FUND	220.66
	WATER	35,853.16
	SEWER	27,061.41
	GARBAGE	19,497.32
	STORM WATER	2,963.68
		<u>128,701.29</u>

Joe Quail, with Quail Construction spoke with the council regarding the Workforce Housing Tax Credit. The Council will inventory any infill lots and continue discussions.

Swanson moved to approve Resolution 09-23 – Unpaid Nuisance Charges. Zylstra seconded. Roll call vote: Ayes: Zylstra, Booth, Christenson, Swanson. Nays: None. Absent: Jamison. Motion carried.

Booth moved to approve setting the date for the FY24 Budget Public Hearing for April 17th, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Christenson seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

No discussion or decision was held regarding the pool project.

Booth moved to adjourn at 5:35 p.m. Zylstra seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.

John Jamison, Mayor Pro Tem

Hilary Reed, City Clerk